

THE
TEMPLE
OF
TASTE.

BY M. DE VOLTAIRE.

GLASGOW:
Printed by ROBERT URIE. MDCCLI.



A

L E T T E R

O F

Mr. de V O L T A I R E,

T O

Mr. de C——.

S I R,

YOU saw and can witness,
how this trifle was conceived,
and executed. It was the amuse-
ment of a society. You had your
share in it, as well as others; each
of the company furnished his notions;

and my part was little more, than to reduce them to writing.

Mr. de—— said, it was a pity BAYLE had swelled his dictionary with more than two hundred articles of Ministers, and Lutheran or Calvinist Professors; that in looking for the article of CAESAR, he had met with only that of JOHN CAESARIUS, Professor at Boulogne; and that, instead of SCIPIO, he had found six large pages on GERARD SCIOPIUS. Upon this, it was agreed, by a plurality of voices, to reduce BAYLE to one single volume, in the library of THE TEMPLE OF TASTE.

You all assured me, you had been sufficiently tired with reading The

History of the French Academy; *that you interested yourselves very little in the works of BALESDENS, PORCHERES, BARDIN, BAUDOUIN, FARET, COLLETET, COTTIN, and other such great men; and I believed you on your words. It was added, that there is no Lady at present, who does not write better Letters than VOITURE. It was said, that St. EVREMONT thought never to have written Verse, and that All his Prose did not deserve to be printed. It is the judgment of the Public; and I, who find all books too long, especially my own, reduce all these volumes to a very few pages.*

In all this I am but the Public's

Secretary : *If those, who lose their cause, complain, they should not address themselves to the person who draws up the Decree.*

I know, the Politicians consider this innocent pleasantry of THE TEMPLE OF TASTE as a serious attempt. They pretend, that none, but an ill-designing person, can advance, that The Castle of Versailles has but seven cross windows in Front, next the court, and maintain that LE BRUN, the king's first painter, was deficient in Colouring.

The Rigorists say, it is impious to place the Opera Ladies, Lucretius, and the Doctors of the Sorbonne, in THE TEMPLE OF TASTE.

*Authors, whom we never thought of, exclaim at the satire, and take it ill, that their faults are pointed out, but their beauties passed in silence; an unpardonable crime, which they never will forgive; and they call THE TEMPLE OF TASTE a Dif-
famatory Libel.*

They add, that it betrays a malignancy of disposition, never to commend any person, without a small Corrective; and that, in this dangerous work, we never fail to scratch those a little, whom we care for.

I will reply in two words to this accusation; he, who commends every thing, is but a Flatterer; he only knows how to praise, who praises with restriction.

In short, to range our ideas in order, as is necessary in this enlightened age, I will say, we ought to distinguish a little between a Criticism, Satire, and a Libel.

To say, that the Treatise of Studies is a book, which is always useful, and that, for this reason we ought to retrench some Pleasantries, and Vulgar Expressions, little agreeable to so serious a work: to say, that the Worlds is a charming, and as yet unrivaled, performance, and that one is sorry to find, in it, that The Day is a fair, and The Night a brown, Beauty; this is Criticism.

When BOILEAU says

*—— Pour trouver un Auteur sans défaut
La Raison dit Virgile, & la Rime Quintaut :*

This is Satire; and unjust satire in every sense; saving the respect due to that author: for the rime of default is not fine enough to require that of QUINAUT; and it is as little true, to say, that VIRGIL is without fault, as to say that QUINAUT is without genius, and without beauty.

The Couplets of ROUSSEAU, The Masque of Lavernum, and such horrible stuff; *such expressions are what we call a Diffamatory Libel.*

All Good-Natured men, who think, are Critics; the Malignant are Satirists; the Perverse are Libellers: and those, who, together with myself, drew up THE TEM-

PLE OF TASTE, *are neither ill-natured, nor bad, men.*

In a word, this was our amusement for more than fifteen days. The Ideas succeeded each other; every evening, we made some alteration; and this produced seven or eight TEMPLES OF TASTE, absolutely different.

One day, we introduced Foreigners; the next we admitted only French-Men. The Maffei's, the Pope's, the Bononcini's, have lost many lines, hereupon, which need not be regretted. However it was, this piece of pleasantry was not designed to be made public.

One of the worst, and most incorrect, copies of this Trifle was print-

ed, and published, without my knowledge; and it was very unjust, in the person, whoever he was, who sent it to the press.

Perhaps it may be more wrong still to publish this new edition. We ought not to make the Public the confidant of our amusements. But the folly is committed; and it is one of those cases, in which we must necessarily be guilty of a fault.

The Public, then, has this little Sketch (if it deserves the name) such as it was composed in a society, which could amuse themselves without Gaming, which cultivated the Belles Lettres without a spirit of party, which was fonder of Truth, than

Satire, and knew how to praise without flattery.

Had the design been to write a Dissertation on TASTE, we should have desired the DE COTES, and the BAUFRANCS, to discourse with us on Architecture, the COYPELS to define their Art with spirit, the DESTOUCHES to inform us what are the beauties of Music, the CREBILLONS to paint the Terror, which ought to animate the Theatre: the little each would have said on his own Science would have filled a large volume in folio. But we were satisfied with giving the sentiments of the Public in general; and MY province was to hold The Pen.

I have but a word more to say

on our young Nobility, who employ the happy leisure of Peace in cultivating learning and arts; far different, in this, from the august Visigoths, their ancestors, who could not even sign their name. If there be yet any, in our polite nation, such barbarians, and half-wits, as to disapprove so noble an employ, we may venture to affirm, they would do as much if they had abilities for it. I am persuaded, that, when a man does not cultivate a talent, it is because he is not master of it; that every one will make Verses, who is born a Poet, and compose Music, who is born a musician.

All that remains, is, to tell the grave Critics, who allow no amuse-

ment to be reputable, but Lanfquenet, and Biribi, that the Courtiers of Lewis XIV, when they returned from the conquest of Holland, in the year 1672, danced on the Theatre of LULLI, in Bel-leaire's Tennis-Court, with the Dancers of the Opera, and that no one pretended to reflect on them for so doing. With more reason then, I think, ought we to pardon our youth, for having wit and sense, in an age, which understood nothing but debauchery.

Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci.

Each point that author hits aright,

Who mixes profit with delight.

T H E
T E M P L E
O F
T A S T E.

TH E *Cardinal*, * the oracle of *France*; not the *Mentor* who presides at the helm, just, peaceable, humble amidst power, master of all, more master of himself; not the *Cardinal-Minister*, but the *Nestor*, who is the support of *Parnassus*; who has surpassed the expectations of the learned; the patron, and *Mecænas*, of the

* The Cardinal de POLIGNAC.

age; and whose mild, persuasive, eloquence reigns with universal influence; the *Cardinal*, who has taught *Philosophy* herself to speak the beautiful language of *Poetry*, uniting the harmony of *Virgil* with the reasoning of *Plato*; heaven's great avenger, and vanquisher of *Lucretius* (1); the *Cardinal*, in short, whom every one knows by this picture, invited me, one day, to accompany him to *The Temple of Taste*.

“ It is an *Abode*”, said he,
“ which

(1.) *The Cardinal de Polignac has written a Latin Poem against Lucretius. The men of learning know the beautiful verses with which it begins.*

Pieridum si forte lepos aulicæ canentes
Deficit, Eloquio victi, re vincimus ipsi.

“ which *All* the world speaks of,
 “ which *Few* visit, and which they,
 “ who travel thither, seldom take
 “ the pains to examine. It is fit
 “ you should have a nearer view
 “ of the *Deity*, you would serve.
 “ You have taken him for your
 “ master; and he is, at least ought
 “ to be, so; but you adore him
 “ at too great a distance; and my
 “ design is to bring you better ac-
 “ quainted with him.”

I thanked his *Eminency* for his
 goodness, and said to him; “ I
 “ am extremely indiscreet; if you
 “ take me with you, I shall cer-
 “ tainly boast of it to all the world.
 “ Presently it will be expected,
 “ I should compose a large vo-

“ lume on this *little Pilgrimage*.
 “ *Voltaire* pretends to nothing
 “ more, than a plain, short,
 “ narrative; which yet will ex-
 “ pose him to ridicule, will give
 “ offence to the *Courtiers*, and be
 “ looked upon, by *the town*, as
 “ meerinvention, a *Tale of a Tub*,
 “ or a *Voyage to Utopia*. Besides,
 “ should some ill-natured critic
 “ demand, where, and in what
 “ corner of the world, this *Di-*
 “ *vine Mansion* is situated, what
 “ would your *Eminency* have me
 “ say?”

The cardinal replied, “ that the
 “ *Temple* was situated in the coun-
 “ try of *Polite Arts*; that I must
 “ absolutely follow him; and that

“ if I exposed myself to a little ridicule, there was no great harm in it ; it was in my power to return the jest.” I obeyed, and we set out.

You was of the party, most amiable abbot ; you, who are always inspired by *Taste* ; whose genius is delicate, and just ; and whose example deigns to point out to me the unerring path to *Taste* ; that *God*, whom many a *Wit* of the present age takes so much pains to be ignorant of.

We met with several *Interruptions* in our way. The first was *Messieurs Ordus, Lexicocrassius, Scriverius*, a cloud of *Commentators*, who were restoring passages.

and writing whole volumes on an unintelligible word. There I saw the *Daciers* (2) and *Salmasius's* (3) fellows over head and ears in

(2) *Mr. Dacier was a man of great learning; he understood every thing in the Ancients, but their beauties. His Commentaries discover great erudition, but little taste. He has translated very grossly the delicacies of Horace.*

If Horace says to his Mistress.

Miseri, quibus
Intentata nites.

Dacier says, Malheureux ceux, qui se laissent attirer par cette bonace, sans vous connoître. i. e. Unhappy they, who suffer themselves to be deceived by this calm, without knowing you. He translates,

Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero
Pulsanda tellus.

C'est maintenant qu'il faut boire, & que, sans rien craindre, il faut danser de toute sa

learned fooleries : their complexion was yellow ; their eyes red and

force. *i. e.* It is now we ought to drink, and, without fearing any thing dance with all our might. *And,*

Mox juniores quaerit adulteros ;

Elles ne font pas plutot mariees, qu' elles cherchent de nouveaux galans. *i. e.* No sooner are they married, but they look out for new gallants.

But, tho' he disguises Horace, and his notes are learned, without taste, yet his book is full of useful researches, and the public applauds his pains, notwithstanding his want of genius.

(3.) Claudius Salmalius, of Dijon, spent almost his whole life in writing large volumes against Justus Lipsius, and Heinſius, on uſeleſs questions. At laſt he undertook to defend the moſt ſerious, and moſt famous, cauſe, that ever was, I mean that of Charles I. king of England, againſt Cromwell. We meet with the following paſſage at the beginning of a book, written by him, on this ſubject, by order of Char-

dry ; and their backs bending beneath a load of Greek authors, all besmeared with ink, and covered with dust. I could not forbear calling out to them not to enter the *Temple of Taste* to clean themselves. “ We, Gentlemen ! ” replied they ; “ by no means : thank heaven ! *Taste* is not our study ; “ there is no such thing in nature : “ our business is to digest, with “ great exactness, the thoughts of

les II. Anglois, qui vous renvoiez les tetes des Rois comme des Balles de paume, qui jouez a la boule avec les Couronnes, & qui servez des sceptres comme de marotes. *i. e.* Ye English, who make tennis-balls of the heads of kings, who play at bowls with crowns, and use scepters as play-things. *Note, that Milton answered him in the same style.*

“ others ; we never think ourselves.”

After this ingenuous confession, these gentlemen furrounded our coach, and would absolutely have obliged us to read certain passages of *Diëtys Cretensis*, and *Metrodorus Lampsacensis*, which *Gronovius*, as they pretended, had maimed. We thanked them for their kindness, and continued our journey.

We had scarce gone an hundred steps, when we encountered a person, furrounded with *Painters*, *Architeëts*, *Sculptors*, *Gilders*, *pretended Virtuofos*, and *Flatterers*; who *All* turned their backs upon *the Temple of Taste*. This *Croesus* reposed himself with an air of self-

fatisfaction, and pride, and thus, in a bombast tone, addressed his followers.

“ I have *much Money*, gentle-
 “ men! and *more Wit*; I may pass
 “ for the true *God of Taste*; and
 “ without learning, I know every
 “ thing. I have a piercing eye in
 “ the management of affairs; and,
 “ spight of winds, rocks, and pi-
 “ rates, have brought my ship safe
 “ into harbour. Come on, then,
 “ build me a *Magnificent Palace*;
 “ a palace, fit for *Me*; I need say
 “ no more: croud every polite
 “ art into the structure, and fit it
 “ for the daily reception of my
 “ admirers. I have money e-
 “ nough: ye rascals! hear, and o-

“bey me.” He said, and fell asleep.

Instantly, the rabble, about him, fell to work. A *Mason*, now another *Vitruvius*, drew the *Plan*, which was overcharged with *Ornaments*. No *Vestibule*; much less a *Front*; but you might see a long *Suite* of *Rooms*; the *Walls* were two inches thick; the *Closets* large: the *Salon* shallow; the *Windows* like *Church-Doors*; the whole, in short, wainscotted, varnished, carved, and gilt.—the admiration of fools!

A *Painter*, who stood by, waked my gentleman, and begged of him to admire the industry of his art, “*Raphael*,” Sir! said he,

“ knew nothing of embellishing a
 “ palace: I, alone, have the hap-
 “ py talent of improving nature.
 “ Give me leave to exercise my
 “ pencil, in *Perspective*, on your
 “ cielings, and vaulted roofs.”

Croesus rouzes; he surveys, dis-
 poses, approves, and corrects, at a
 venture. A *Virtuoso*, by his side,
 with a perspective in his hand, cri-
 ed out; “ Turn your eyes this way;
 “ see here, Sir! this is for your
 “ chappel. Let me recommend
 “ this picture to your purchase :
 “ It is *God the Father*, in his e-
 “ ternal glory, prettily painted in
 “ the taste of *Vatau*. (4)”

(4) *Vatau* was a Dutch painter, of the
 French school. He painted at Paris, where he

In the mean time, a *tricking Bookseller*, the mercenary *Pirate of Wits*, and artful vender of non-ferse and wind, smiling with the air and mien of a sharper, measured him out books by the yard; for his honour is, above all things, very learned.

I was in hopes, after this little stop, we should have met with no farther interruption, in our way to the *Temple*; but the road is more dangerous, than I imagined. We,

died a few years ago. He succeeded in small Figures, which were pretty and light, and finely grouped; but he performed nothing great, nor was, indeed, capable of it. M. de Julienne caused his work to be engraved with great care.

presently, fell into a new ambuscade.

It was a *Concert of Music*, given at a country-seat, whimsically situated, and as oddly built. The master of the house, seeing the *Cardinal's* coach at a distance, and knowing that his Eminency was just arrived from *Italy*, came to invite him to the *Concert*. He said to him, in few words, a great deal of ill of *Lully*, *Destouckes*, and *Campra*, and assured him, that, in his *Concert*, there was no *French Music*.

The *Cardinal*, in vain, remonstrated to him, that the *Italian* and *French Music* were both good, in their kind; and that nothing is

more ridiculous than *Italian*, sung after the *French* manner, unless, perhaps, it be *French*, sung after the *Italian* manner. For, said he to him, (with a tone of voice, which gives new grace to reason)

“ Nature, which is fertile, ingenious, and wise, in distributing her gifts over the universe, speaks to all mankind ; but with different accents : thus every people has its distinct *Language*, as well as *Genius*, its sounds, and its accents, suited to its organs of speech ; marked out, with exactness, by the hand of nature herself : the difference is very sensible to a fine and judicious ear. In *France*, we should sing

“ after the *French* manner. *Lully*
 “ adapted his *Musick* to our taste;
 “ and instead of altering, improv-
 “ ed our skill.

To these judicious words my gentleman replied with a shake of the head. “ Come, come,” said he; “ you shall be entertained “ with something *New*.” We were obliged to go in; and now his concert opens.

Immediately, twenty coxcomb-ly rivals of the great *Lully*, but much more enemies to art and good sense, with squeaking accents, murdered *French Verses* in *Italian Trills*. One puppy, with a languishing air, died away: another fool, admired himself, and

his fine cloths, quavered, and trilled, and, beating false time, cried out *bravo*, when any one played out of tune.

We made the best of our way out : and it was thro' many such adventures that we arrived, *at last*, at *The Temple of Taste*.

The foundation of this beautiful *Temple* was, originally, laid in *Greece*; its structure firm and durable, and its summit in the clouds. It became the wonder, and praise, of the whole world. The *Roman*, long barbarous and untractable, yet mild in victory, here laid down his *Barbarity*, and softened into *Polliteness*: but the relentless and implacable *Mussulman* conquered, and

razed, the *Temple*; (5) the ruins of which, dispersed by the fury of the *Infidel*, were collected together in *Italy*, and another, soon after, erected on this model, by *Francis I.* His posterity despised the beautiful architecture, 'till *Richelieu* arose, and repaired the deserted temple. *Lewis the Great*, at last, adorned it; and to this sanctuary his faithful minister, *Colbert*, drew the immortal train of *Polite Arts*. *Europe* beheld, with jealousy and ad-

(5) *When Mahomet II. took Constantinople, in 1453, All the Greeks, who cultivated arts and sciences, took refuge in Italy. They were principally received by the houses of Medicis, Est, and Bentivoglio, to whom Italy owes its politeness, and its glory.*

admiration, this *Temple* in its new lustre and beauty. How long it will continue, I pretend not to determine.

This would be a proper place to enlarge upon the *Structure* of this edifice, and to talk of the *Architrave*, and *Archivolte*, if I intended not to be read. To avoid, therefore, the wordy *Impertinence* of M. *Felibien* (6) who can treat of *Nothing* in all the pomp of language, I shall only observe, that this valuable structure is not loaded with *Pieces of Antiquity*, such

(6) M. *Felibien* wrote five volumes on Painting, in which there is less to be found, than in the single volume, of building.

as our *Gothic* ancestors were wont to croud on the walls of their *Temples*; nor has it the *pompous Faults* of the *Chappel of Versailles*; that gew-gaw, which the vulgar admire, but good judges deride.

It is much easier to say what this temple *Is not*, than what it *Is*: I shall only add, to avoid the difficulty, that its *Architecture* is *Simple*, and *Great*; that every *Ornament* seems to have been placed, through necessity, just where it is; and that the satisfied eye takes in the whole structure, never surprized, but always pleased (7).

(7) *When we enter a Structure, built according to the true rules of Architecture, and*

The temple was surrounded with a croud of *Virtuoso's*, *Artists*, and *Judges* of all kinds, who attempted to enter, but could not: for *Criticism*, with a look of severity and justice, who kept the keys of the august entrance, repulsed, with an arm of brass, the *Gothic Herd*, which was perpetually advancing.

The *Goddeſs* refused admittance to those *obſcure Satiriſts*, who, underhand, publiſh wretched criti-

C 2

obſerve all the proportions, nothing appears either too big or too little: and the whole ſeems to grow upon us inſenſibly, in proportion as we conſider it. The quite contrary happens in Gothic buildings.

cisms on good performances; a race of insects, whose existence we should know nothing of, did they not endeavour to *bite*. She sent back, likewise, those busy, idle, *Courtiers*, who employ their whole credit, to no purpose, in raising a party against a new piece: such intriguing cabals of pretended men of wit, whom we see, at *Paris*, patronize the *Pradons*, and *Scuderis*, against the immortal writings of a *Cornille*, or a *Racine*.

She repulsed more roughly those unjust and dangerous persons, those *Enemies* of all *Merit*, who sincerely hate every thing, that succeeds, whatever it be. Such men would, alike, have envied the great *Condé*

his *Rocroy*, *Villars* his *Denain*, and *Cornille* his *Polieuête*. *Le Brun* would have incurred their anger for his picture of the *Family of Darius*. Their mouths destil calumny: *Telemachus* is, with them, a libel against *Lewis XIV.* and *Esther* a satire upon the ministry: they give you a new key to *La Bruyere*: they infect every thing they touch: begotten by *Pride* on the loins of *Envy*, they fascinate the eyes of our French *Midas's*: the *Fool* applauds; the *Knave* supports them; whilst the poor, ruined, *Arts* fly far off, to give vent to those tears, which only juster times can wipe away.

They all fled at the sight of the *Cardinal*, and the *Abbot de Rotelin*, whom they had a natural aversion to. Their hasty flight made room for a more entertaining spectacle: it was a croud of authors of all sorts, who pressed for admittance. One brought a *New Romance*; another, a *Speech to the Academy*; a third, a *Poetical Miscellany*, with a long approbation, which the public never heard of. One author pretended a *Mandate*, written in an affected style, and was greatly surprized, when the company fell a laughing, instead of asking his blessing, “ I am the *Reverend Father*”—— said one.

“ Room for *my Lord!* ”—— cry-
ed another.

A certain *Critic*, cried out:
“ Gentlemen! I am an impartial
“ judge, I talk; I reason; I con-
“ tradict; I hiss, where the pub-
“ lic applauds.” *Criticism* appear-
ed and said to him: “ Friend *Bar-*
“ *dus!* You are a very great ma-
“ ster, it must be confessed, but
“ this is no place for you. Would
“ you ridicule our deity? Be sa-
“ tisfied, that you have no know-
“ lege of him.” *Bardus*, thus re-
pulsed, began a long discourse a-
gainst the existence of the *God of*
Taste. He assured us, this divini-
ty was a meer *Chimera*: he pro-
posed, he divided, he subdivided,

he distinguished, he resumed; but no one listened to him.

Amidst the senseless throng, which was refused admittance, advanced, very gently, *La Motte Houdart*; who said, with a whining tone, “ Open, gentlemen; I bring my *OEdipus* “ in *prose*. My verses, I confess, “ are ragged, but manly, and full “ of sense. Open the door, I beseech you; I have a word, or “ two to say to *Boileau* against “ the use of *Verse*.

Criticism acknowledged the reasonable author, in the mildness of his aspect; and the *Translator* of the *Iliad*, in the raggedness of his style. She left him, for some time,

between *Chapelain* and *Desmarets*, who had been railing at *Homer* and *Virgil*, before the gate of the *Temple*, for fifty years.

Pretendly arrived another *Versifier*, on the strength of two *Satires*. He came up with a confident air, and expressed his surprize, that the door was not immediately opened.

“ I come (says he,) with mirth and play,
 “ To pass the jayous hours away,
 “ And vent my spleen ’till dawn of day.” *

“ Who is this, I hear?” says *Criticism*: “ ’Tis I,” replies the

* Je viens — pour rire, et pour m’ebattre,
 Me rigolant, menant joyeux deduit,
 Et jusqu’ au jour faisant le Diable a quatre.

ROUSSEAU.

“ *Rhymer* ; I come from *Germany*,
 “ to pay you a visit, and have ta-
 “ ken the season of the spring.”

“ *For now the gentle Zephirs crack*
 “ *The shell that bound the Ocean's back.*” ‡

The more he talked this lan-
 guage, the less the gate opened.
 “ You take me then,” continued
 he,

“ *For an inhabitant o'th' lake,*
 “ *Who chaunts his musical Quaak, Quaak.*” †

‡ Car les jeunes Zephirs, de leurs chaudes ha-
 Ont fondu l'ecorce des eaux. [leines,

† Pour une Grenouille aquatique
 Qui du fond d'un petit thorax,
 Vau chantant pour toute musique
 Brekeke koax, koax, koax, koax.

Id.

“ Good God !” cries *Criticism*,
 “ what horrible jargon !” She ordered the gate to be opened, that she might see the animal, who had so remarkable a cry. But how great was her astonishment, when every body assured her, it was *Roussseau*. She shut the gate against him as fast as possible: upon which, the despairing Rhymer cried out to her, in his Marotic style;

“ Ah! be not so hard-hearted;
 “ I deserve admission into your
 “ temple: let my humour, and
 “ my style, plead for me; behold
 “ verses against every one of my
 “ friends!—— O *Criticism*! thou
 “ useful goddess! from thee alone

“ my inspiration came: abhorred
 “ in every place, and at all times,
 “ where shall I fly for shelter, but
 “ to you?”

At these words, *Criticism* ordered the *Temple* to be opened, appeared with the air of a judge, and thus addressed the *Cynic*.

“ *Rousseau!* you are too little
 “ acquainted with me. The candor and ingenuity of *Criticism*
 “ never presided over your writings. Pretend not to the inspiration of a *God*, when it is the
 “ *Demon* of *Satire* alone that
 “ possesses your mind. Certain
 “ *Couplets* of a *Song*, and a wretched
 “ *Factum*, * have banished

* *A Case, drawn up in the form of a Plea.*

“ your satiric muse (8). But the
 “ equitable god *Apollo* has better
 “ punished your rage. He takes
 “ from you that small share of
 “ *Genius*, which you pretend he
 “ had bestowed upon you; he
 “ deprives you of *Harmony*; and
 “ you have nothing left, at pre-
 “ sent, but an impotent passion
 “ for continuing to scribble, in
 “ spight of him, *Teutonic Verses*,
 “ || which he disclaims.”

La Mothe heard all this: he
 laughed; but not too loud, and
 with discretion. *Roussseau*, in a

(8) See the Factum of Mr. Saurin, of the
 academy of Sciences, against *Roussseau*; with the
 Arrêt, which condemns the latter as a calum-
 niator.

| Verses in an obsolete style.

passion, reproached the *Academician* with all the bad verses, he had ever made in his life. “ Remember (9) the *Foretelling* “ *Horn*,” said *Rousscau*, with a sneer: “ And be sure not to forget “ the *Egg boiled in its shell*,” replied *la Mothe* mildly. The dispute would have continued a long time, had not *Criticism* enjoined them silence, and said to them : “ Hear me; both of you keep to “ your first works, and burn your

(9) Plus loin, une main frenetique
Chasse du corne fatidique
L' Oracle roulant du destin.

La Mothe.

Ah ! je connois votre Equivoque,
Et ressemblez a l'œuf cuit dans sa coque.

Rousscau.

“ last (10). You, *Rousséau!* take
 “ place of *la Mothe*, in quality of
 “ *Verfifier*; but, whenever wit
 “ and good sense are in question,
 “ place yourself far below him.”
 This was the *Goddess's* decision;
 but it satisfied neither of them.

I was present at this scene. *Criticism*
descried me. “ Ah !” says
 she, “ you have a great deal of
 “ courage to enter this place.” I
 humbly replied; “ Dangerous god-
 “ des! I am here, only in obe-
 “ dience to the commands of these
 “ gentlemen : I should never have
 “ ventured hither alone.” “ Well !”

(10) *The first verses of La Mothe, and Rouf-
 seau, were received very favourably by the pub-
 lic; but the last had no success.*

says she, “ in respect to them, I
 “ permit you to stay ; but endeavour
 “ your to profit by what you see
 “ here. In particular, avoid
 “ laughing at the authors, you
 “ have seen: correct yourself, without
 “ instructing them : give to
 “ *Brutus* more *Plot*, to *Zaire*
 “ more *Probability* ; and, if you
 “ will take my advice, no longer
 “ forget, that you wrote *Artemira*.

The goddess, I found, had still more to say ; already she began to talk to me of *Philœtetes* ; when I stole away, and made room for an author, whose single merit far outweighed that of *la Motte*, *Rousseau*, and *Myself*. It

It was the learned *Fontenelle*, attended by the *Polite Arts*; over whom, at his pleasure, he spread a bright and uncommon light. He had just descended, on the wing, from a *Planet*, to revisit this place, the happy seat of the empire of *Taste*. He jested with *Quinault*, reasoned with *Mairan*, and dextrously handled the *Compass*, the *Pen*, and the *Lyre*.

Many of the learned expressed their indignation at the sight of this person, against whom they had written so many epigrams. "What!" says one of them, "will *True Taste* suffer, in his temple, the author of *The Letters of the Chevalier de Her*——; *The Pas-*

“ *sion of Autumnus; Moon-light;*
 “ *The Brook in love with the Mea-*
 “ *dow; Asper; Endymion; etc?*”

——“ No !” replied *Criticism*,
 “ We do not consider him as the
 “ author of these pieces, but as
 “ author of *The Worlds*, a work
 “ which you may profit by ; of
 “ *Tbetis and Peleus*, an Opera,
 “ which may provoke your envy;
 “ and of the *History of the Aca-*
 “ *demy of Sciences*, which I wish
 “ you understood.”

Then turning to the amiable
Interpreter of Philosophy, “ I will
 “ not reproach you,” said she,
 “ as these jealous cynics do, with
 “ your juvenile productions : but
 “ I am *Criticism* ; you are dear
 “ to the God of *Taste*, and I am

“ ordered to tell you that your
 “ muse is a little too fond of art.
 “ Spoil her not with paint: her
 “ complexion is beauteous enough
 “ without it. Go, and follow my
 “ advice; it is that of the *God of*
 “ *Taste*, of *Criticism*, and the pub-
 “ lic. In the mean time, place
 “ yourself between *Lucretius*, and
 “ *Leibnitz*.”

I demanded, why *Leibnitz*
 was there: they told me it
 was because he had written
 some tolerable good *Latin Verses*,
 though he was a *Metaphy-*
sician, and a *Geometer*; and that
Criticism suffered him in this place,
 in order to soften, by this exam-

ple, the rugged disposition of most of his fraternity.

As for *Lucretius*, he blushed, at first, at the sight of the *Cardinal*, his enemy. But scarce had he heard him speak, but he loved him: he ran, and embraced him, confessed his errors, and addressed him, in excellent Latin verse, to the following effect.

“ Blind as I was, yet I thought
 “ I saw *Nature*: I walked in the
 “ night, conducted by *Epicurus*: I
 “ adored, as a *God*, that conceit-
 “ ed mortal, who made war with
 “ heaven, and dethroned the gods.
 “ The *Soul* appeared to me but
 “ a faint spark, which the night
 “ of death disperses in air. You

“ have vanquished me ; I yield ;
 “ and confess the soul is immortal,
 “ no less than your name, your
 “ writings, and my verses.”

The *Cardinal* answered *Lucretius* in the language of that poet. All the poets of antiquity, who heard him, took him for an *Old Roman*.

At length, after these agreeable interruptions, amidst the *Polite Arts*, the *Muses*, and the *Pleasures* themselves, we arrived at the very altar, and throne, of the *God of Taste*.

I saw this *God* whom I invoke in vain ; this charming *God*, whom description cannot reach ; this *God*, whom we cannot worship with too scrupulous an adoration ; whose

influence *La Fontaine* makes us feel; and whom *Vadius* is yet in search of.

He amused himself, with studying those simple and genuine *Graces*, which are the boast of *France*; those affecting and lively *Graces*, which attentive nations oft would imitate; which are not the captives of *Art*; which have long reigned in the *Gallic Court*; and which *Nature* and *Love* gave birth to on our shores.

By this lovely troop is the *God* ever surrounded: their hands adorn him; and it is by them he desires to please. They have crowned him with a *Diadem*, formed, by *Apollo* himself, on *Parnassus*, of

the *Lawrels* of the divine *Virgil*, the *Lyre* and *Myrtle* of *Horace*, and the *Roses* of *Anacreon*. In his aspect reigns *Wisdom*: his air is soft, but full of vivacity; and in his eyes the *Loves* have expressed the *Delicate Sentiment*.

Le More sung before his altars: near her, *Pelissier* expressed all the tenderness of *Lulli* (11): *Salle*, with all the grace and justness of motion, traversed the temple (12): *Camargo* lightly bounded along (13):

(11) *Mademoiselles Le More and Pelissier, two celebrated singers at the Opera.*

(12) *Mademoiselle Salle, an excellent dancer, who expresses the passions. This lady, at present, is in England, and performs at the Theatre-royal in Covent-Garden.*

(13) *Mademoiselle Camargo, the first, who danced as a man.*

and, farther off, *Le Couvreur* was *rehearsing*, with that divine grace, which formerly added new charms to *Racine* (14).

The sage *Rollin* (15) kept at a distance from this enchanting throng: he was reading lectures, at the farther end of the *Temple*, to the youth; who listened attentively to him, notwithstanding the

(14) *Adrienne Le Couvreur, the best Actress, in Tragedy, France ever had; and the first, who introduced on the stage the Natural Declamation.*

(15) *Charles Rollin, formerly rector of the university, author of the Treatise of Studies, a book written with great correctness and taste, and in which the public only found fault with a few Pleasantries improperly introduced.*

the *Severity* of the *Morals*, which he taught, and the *Academic Robe* he wore ; a thing very uncommon to those of his profession.

In a vaulted closet, embellished with the *Sculpture* of *Girardon* and *le Puget* (16), *Poussin* was painting ; *le Sueur* placed himself among them ; and *le Brun* was drawing designs (17). The *God*, who followed with his eye each

(16) *Girardon* and *Le Puget*, two excellent French Sculptors. *Girardon* had more Grace, *Le Puget* more Expression.

(17) *Le Poussin*, *Le Brun*, and *Le Sueur*, are at the head of the French School. They are all three censured for neglecting the Colouring, which is the most bewitching part of Painting ; but they excelled in the design, which is the most essential part.

stroke of their pencil, though he greatly approved them, could not forbear complaining, that, in spite of their efforts, their *pictures* still wanted the *Colouring* of *Nature*. Presently the sportive *Loves* re-touched each piece, with a pencil, dipped in the beautiful colours of the *Pallet* of *Rubens*.

In the same closet, sacred to the modern *Apelles's* and *Phidias's*, some were cultivating that other *Art*, found out in *Italy*, and brought to perfection in *France*; (18) that art, which multiplies, and immortalises, *Picture*, without the help of *Colours*. There you might see a collection of *Impressès*, from all the beautiful *Paintings* in *France*.

(18) *The art of Graving in copper, discovered*

Crozat (19) presided over this design: he conducted *The Graving Tool*, which immortalises, on *Copper*, the happy grace of *Boulogne*, and the judicious spirit of *Poussin*.

Opposite, are the *Models* of our finest *Buildings*. The *Connoisseurs* assembled about *Colbert*, the *Mæcenas* and protector of arts and sciences. They all congratulated the *Cardinal de Polignac* on the *Salon*, or *Great Hall*, of *Marius*, which he dug up at *Rome*, and at *Florence*, by a Goldsmith, name / *Finguerra* at the beginning of the 16th century; and found out like most other Arts by chance.

(19) N—*Crozat*, one of the most celebrated *Virtuoso*es, caused to be engraved the *Paintings* and *Designs* of the greatest masters in France. This work is already very far advanced by the care of *Mr. Robert*, a very able *Sculptor* and *Painter*.

now adorns *France* with (20).

Colbert often cast his eyes on that beautiful *Front* of the *Louvre*, the invention of which is still disputed between *Perrault*, and *Le Vau*. He expressed his grief, that so fine a monument would perish, with-

(20) *The Cardinal de Polignac, conjecturing, that a certain spot of ground in Rome was the place, where Marius dwelt, procured it to be dug up. Several feet under ground, they discovered an entire Salon, or Great-Hall, with several Statues, very well preserved. Among these Statues, are Ten, which form a compleat Series, and represent Achilles, disguised as a Woman, at the court of Lycomedes, and discovered by the artifice of Ulysses. This collection is the most uncommon and beautiful of any in Europe. It is at the Cardinal's house, here the curious may see it.*

out ever having been finished.

“ Ah !” said he, “ why was nature forced, to make, of the *Castle of Versailles*, an undeserved favourite, whilst, by continuing the *Louvre*, we might have equaled, in good *Taste*, both ancient and modern *Rome*?”

On an altar was to be seen the *Plan of Luxembourg*; of that noble *Portal*, which wants a *Square*, a *Church*, and *Admirers*; of that *Fountain*, which was a masterpiece of *Taste*, in a time of ignorance; of that *Triumphal Arch*, which would have been the admiration of *Rome*, and which the vulgar name of *St. Denis's Gate*

deprives of all its merit, in the eyes of most *Parisians*.

The *God*, in the meantime, was amusing himself with forming the model of a compleat *Palace*. He added the *Architecure* of the castle *de Maissons*, the situation, proportions, and ornaments of which he had himself suggested to the amiable owner of the edifice, and to which he added some conveniences.

I demanded, with a low voice, why there have been, in proportion, fewer good *Architects* in *France*, than good *Sculptors*. The *Cardinal*, who is acquainted with the whole Circle of Arts, condescended to reply thus. “ In

“ the first place, *Sculptors* and *Paint-*
 “ *ters*, have the full liberty of their
 “ genius, whereas *Architects* are
 “ often cramped by the *Situati-*
 “ *on*, but ofner by the caprice of
 “ the master. In the second place,
 “ *Sculptors* and *Painters*, as they
 “ perform a greater number of
 “ works, have more opportunities
 “ of correcting themselves. An
 “ hundred private persons had it
 “ in their power to employ the
 “ pencils of *Poussin*, *Jouvenet*,
 “ *Santerre*, *Boulogne*, and *Vatau*;
 “ and, even at this day, our mo-
 “ dern *Painters* work, almost all
 “ of them, for meer citizens. But
 “ one must be a *King*, or super-
 “ intendant, to exercise the geni-

“ is of a *Mansart* or *Desbrosses*.
 “ In short, the success of the *Paint-*
 “ *er* is in the *Design* of his piece;
 “ that of the *Architect* in his *Mo-*
 “ *del* on the ground: the *Model*
 “ of the *Architect*, on the con-
 “ trary, is deceitful; because the
 “ *Buildings*, viewed, afterwards
 “ at a greater distance, has a very
 “ different effect, and *Aerial Per-*
 “ *spective* changes the *Proportions*.
 “ In a word, it is often, with re-
 “ gard to the plan of a *Building*,
 “ as to most *Machines*, which
 “ succeed only in *Miniature*.”

Having examined this closet, in
 which *Architecture*, *Sculpture*, and
Painting, displayed their charms,
 we went on to a part of the *Tem-*
ple,

ple, where were assembled all those illustrious persons, whom we distinguish by the name of *Wits*, or *Great Geniuses*.

Among these celebrated writers, the *Pavillons*, the *Benferades*, the *Pelissons*, the *Segrais*, the *St. Evremonts*, the *Balzacs*, and the *Voitures*, seemed to me not to stand in the foremost rank. “ They did, “ indeed, formerly,” said one of my guides; “ They shone, ’till *Po-* “ *lite Learning* dawned upon us: “ but, by little and little, they have “ given place to truly great men: “ they, now, make but a very “ moderate figure here. In truth, “ the greatest part of them had “ only the *Genius* of their own “ times, not that *Genius*, which

“ passes to latest posterity. Ma-
 “ ny of the beauties of their works
 “ are already faded: they are still
 “ reckoned among the *Wits*, but
 “ excluded the rank of *Geniuses*.”

They say, that *Segrais*, one day,
 endeavoured to enter the *Temple*, re-
 peating this verse of *Boileau*;

Que *Segrais* dans l'Eglogue en charme les forêtes.
Segrais, in *Eclogue*, charm the listening woods.

But *Criticism*, unhappily for him,
 having read some pages of his *Æ-
 neid*, and *Georgics*, in *French Verse*,
 refused him the gate, and admit-
 ted, in his place, *Madame de la
 Fayette* (21), who had written

(21) *Mr. Huet, bishop of Avranches, re-
 lates, in the 204th page of his Commentaries,
 edition of Amsterdam, that Madame de la Fa-
 yette had so little regard to the reputation she*

under the name of *Segrais*, *Zaide*, and the *Princess of Cleves*.

Pelisson has a place in the *Temple*, on account of the *History of the Franche-Comte*; but he is inexcusable for inserting so many childish things in his *History of the Academy*, and reporting foolish sayings as pieces of *Wit*.

The *Agreeable*, but *Weak*, Pa-

E 2

deserved, that she suffered her *Zaide* to appear under the name of *Segrais*; “and, when I published this piece of secret history,” says the bishop, “some of the friends of *Segrais*, who knew not the truth of it, complained of it, as an outrage to his memory. But it is a fact of which I was long an eye-witness, and which I can prove by several letters of *Madame de la Fayette*, and by the original manuscript of *Zaide*, the leaves of which she sent me as fast as she composed them.

villon makes his court to *Madame Desboulriers*. The *unequal St. Evremont* dares not speak of *Verse* to any one. *Voiture* and *Benferade* are in quest of *Wit*, and meet with only *Turns* and *Quibbles*, which they themselves immediately after blush for: whilst *Balzac*, keeping alone at the top of the vaulted roof, and unintelligible to every one, declaims himself out of breath, in long, *hyperbolical*, phrases.

The *Cardinal* and his *Friend* enquired for the *Count de Buffy*, who, with a discontented fierceness, kept apart from the company. The amiable, the natural, *Madame de Sevigny* hastened to them instead of him. She told them, that her dear

Cousin, a man of *Wit*, but a little *Vain*, and who tired his readers with repeated commendations of himself, had met with but an indifferent reception in these happy regions, for having so often spoken of himself with an air of vain-glory. But his *Son*, his amiable son, said she, is ever with us. It is he, who was esteemed, at *Paris*, the deity of good company; whose delightful conversation so commanded all hearts; who without flattery, or calumny, and disclaiming all pretence to wit, yet *spoke* as well, as his father thought he *wrote*.

Hither I saw arrive the sprightly *Abbe de Chaulieu*, who used to rise from table humming a song. He

ventured to caress the *God*, with a familiar, but amiable, air. His lively imagination, sweetly intoxicated, poured forth *Incorrec̃t Beauties*, which offended a little against *Justness*, but were extremely *Pas-sionate*.

The softer *La Fare*, tuning his harp a note lower, sung, before his mistress, certain verses, which *Pleasure* and *Indolence* dictated to this *bulky Celadon*.

The *God* was extremely fond of these two gentlemen, especially *La Fare*, who piqued himself upon nothing, and even advised his friend *Cbaulieu* to look upon himself only as the first of the *Careless Poets*,

not the first of the *Good* ones, as the *Abbe* very sincerely flattered himself he was.

Between these two stood *Chapelle*; *Chapelle*, more *debauched*, than *delicate*; more *natural*, than *polite*; easy in his *Verse*; *libertin* in his *Ideas*; and *incorrect* in his *Style*: he addressed himself to the *God of Taste* always in the same *meure*. They say, the *God*, one day, replied to him: Restrain your passion for this *unmeaning Rabble of Words*, these *Rhyming Nothings*, which *Richelet* makes a parade of, but men of judgment deride.— This was the *God's* advice, and I think I shall do well to follow it myself.

Chapelle, Chaulieu, La Fare, and St. Evremont, were in conversation with the celebrated *Duke de la Rochefoucault*, and *Madame de la Fayette*: their dialogue had neither the affectation of the *Hotel de Rambouillet*, nor the *Noise and Tumult*, which reigns among our young hot-headed sparks. They equally avoided the *Precise*, the *Pedantic*, the *Starched* air of *Syllogism*, and the *Folly of Passion*. They gracefully united *Good Sense* with *Gaiety*, and *Justness* with *Wit*. Various were the turns of *Humour*; they rallied each other most agreeably; whilst *Good Sense*, not to grow tiresome, disguised itself in *Pleasantry*. They examined, whe-

ther the *Arts* delighted more in a *Monarchy*, than a *Republic* ; whether, at present, we want the assistance of the *Ancients* ; whether *Books* are not too numerous ; and whether *Tragedy* and *Comedy* be not exhausted. They settled the true difference between the *Man of Ability*, and the *Man of Wit* ; between the *Critic*, and the *Satirist* ; between the *Imitator*, and the *Plagiary*. Sometimes they suffered the same person to discourse singly, a long time ; but this rarely happened. Luckily for me, at that very instant, they were assembled about the famous *Ninon Lenclos*. This celebrated *Lady*, who added such great *Probity* to the

pleasing talent of being *Fickle* and *Inconstant*, was, then, making a gay discourse on that pleasing *Art*, and *Delicacy*, which gives the humblest *Beauty* the power of charming.

Whilst I was listening attentively to her discourse, my two grave conductors amused themselves, in conversation with some *Jesuits*, concerning *Polite Learning*.

The *Jesuits* (will some *Janse-nist* say) intrude every where; but the truth is, the *God* of *Taste* has greatly instructed those *Fathers*; he receives them no less than their enemies; and it is pleasant enough to see *Bourdaloue*, in this place, conversing with *Pascal*, on the

great art of joining *Eloquence* with *Reasoning*.

Behind them, was the *exact* and *delicate Bouhours*, who was taking down, in a pocket-book, all the faults of *Language*, and the little *Negligences*, which escaped *Bourdaloue*, and *Pascal*. The *Cardinal de Polignac* could not forbear saying to father *Bouhours*; “ Leave
 “ this critical exactness; let us rather
 “ admire the *Happy Defects*
 “ of their *Masculine* and *Free Eloquence*. I had rather err with
 “ them, than, with so scrupulous
 “ a critic as you, employ my time
 “ in weighing every word in a
 “ scale.”

This was said more *politely*, than I represent it. Father *Boubours* replied; “ Suffer me to go on with
 “ my small remarks. *Great Men* are
 “ the proper objects of criticism,
 “ lest the faults, they commit, a-
 “ gainst rule, should serve as a rule
 “ to inferior writers. We must
 “ censure the errors of *Poussin* and
 “ *Sueur*, not of *Rouet* and *Vignon*;
 “ and, when your *Anti-Lucreti-*
 “ *us* shall be printed, depend upon
 “ my criticism.

“ With all my heart; examine,
 “ contend for trifles, as much as
 “ you please, (said a young *Duke*,
 who had just been hearing *Ninon*,
 and seemed much affected with her
 discourse;) “ for my own part, I

“ cannot possibly find fault with
 “ any one thing, this whole day.”

This gentleman, whom *Ninon* had made so indulgent, was he, who, with a sprightly, amiable, and easy, genius, was remarkable for the happy talent of passing, alternately, from the *Temple of Polite Arts* to the *Temple of Love*; but who was much better pleased with the latter *Asylum*. Presented by the hands of the *Graces*, in *Germany*, and *Italy*, he charmed *Europe*, which his *Uncle* had made to tremble. He is even much better received in the *Temple of Taste*, than that boasted *Uncle*, who restored the *Polite Arts*, in *France*, with the same hand, with which

he humbled, or destroyed, its enemies. This *Terrible Minister*, feared, hated, envied, admired, to excess, in every court, and in his own, is dreaded even in the *Temple of Taste*, of which he is the restorer. They are every moment in fear, lest he should take it in his head to introduce *Chapelain*, *Colletet*, *Faret*, and *Desmarets*; with whom he, formerly, composed most wretched verses.

When I perceived, that the *Cardinal de Richelieu* had not all the precedence given him, I cried out;
 “ It is the same, then, here, as e-
 “ very where else. Inclination pre-
 “ vails over services :” the *Cardinal* himself replied : “ To esta-

“ blish, to preserve, to put in mo-
 “ tion, and restrain ; to give the
 “ world peace, and direct victory
 “ where to fix.— It is this,
 “ which has conducted me, ra-
 “ ther to the *Temple of Glory* than
 “ to the *Temple of Taste*. I am
 “ sensible, that, in this sanctuary,
 “ the *Authority of the Minister*,
 “ the honour of patronizing the
 “ *Polite arts*, perhaps without un-
 “ derstanding them, splendor, in-
 “ trigue, and credit, cannot equal
 “ the charms of *Wit*, and the hap-
 “ py gift of *Pleasing*. This gift
 “ of *Pleasing* does every thing: it
 “ makes the author of a *Song* take
 “ place, in the *Temple*, of the com-
 “ piler of an *hundred Volumes*: it

“ is this, which places, almost in
 “ the same rank with the *Illustri-*
 “ *ous*, those wise and happy men
 “ who, in the bosom of *Arts*, and
 “ *Leisure*, pass the delightful mo-
 “ ments of their life in *Giving*, and
 “ *Receiving*, pleasure. They have
 “ abilities for writing; but, in
 “ order to gain admittance into
 “ this *Temple*, what did they do?
 “ they were *amiable*.”

It was among these *Men of*
Pleasure, and *Artists*, that I found
 the easy, prudent, and agreeable,
La Faye. Happy he, who can pass,
 like him, the last years of life! some-
 times composing verses, easy, and
 full of grace; sometimes hearing
 those of others, without envy or
 con-

contempt; opening his closet to *All the Arts*, but his house to the men alone of gay and polite conversation. How many private persons, in *Paris*, resemble him, indeed, in their fortune? But they want *Taste*: they enjoy it insipidly, and all they understand is, *to be Rich*.

After having tasted the conversation of these amiable men, we went to see the *Library*. It will easily be believed, that we did not meet with, there, an heap of *Worm-eaten Manuscripts*, nor an useless collection of *Authors*, whom no one ever read. The *Muses* themselves had ranged, in their proper order, those *Authors*, which

are universally read, and admired, and whose accurate judgment had supplied them with neither too many, nor too few, *Flowers*.

Almost all the *Editions* are corrected, and retrenched, by the hand of the *Muses*. Three fourths, at least, of *Rabelais* are curtailed, and what remains, whimsical as it is, serves only to make the *God of Taste* sometimes laugh. *Marot*, who is master of but one style, and who sings, in the same tone, *David's Psalms*, and the *Wonders of Alix*, is reduced to *five or six Leaves*. *Voiture*, and *Sarazin*, have not above *sixty pages* between them both. The whole spirit of *Bayle* is comprized in *one volume*; and

that judicious *Philosopher*, that enlightened *Judge* of such a number of *Authors*, and *Seets*, would, probably, have composed but *one folio*, had he wrote only for himself, and not for the *Booksellers*.

St. Evremont, who talks so *delicately* of *Religion*, so *solidly* of *Trifles*, and who wrote such long letters to the fair *Madame Mazarin*, is confined to a very small volume; nor do we meet with, in it, the *Conversation* of father *Canaye*, which belongs to *Charleval*.

The *Conspiracy of Venice*, the only work, which gives the *Abbot de St. Real* a name, is placed next *Sallust*. There is no *French Wri-*

ter, as yet, whom the *Muses* can range with *Tacitus*.

At last, we were admitted within the *Sanctuary*. There the mysteries of the *God* were reveled to me. There I beheld, what ought to serve as an example to all posterity, a small number of *Great Men* doing what they never did in their lives, discovering, and *correcting*, their *Faults*.

La Bruyere was softening the *harsh* and *forced Turns*, which we meet with in his nervous, and uncommon, style. The amiable *Author* of *Telemachus* retrenched the *details* and *repetitions*, in his *Moral Romance*, and crazed the title of *Epic Poem*, which some of his

zealous admirers bestow on him; for he sincerely owns, that there is no such thing as a *Poem in Prose*.

Bouffuet, the only *French-man* truly *eloquent*, amidst so many writers in *Prose*, who, for the most part, are only *elegant*; *Bouffuet*, I say, very willingly retrenched some *vulgarities*, which had escaped his vast and ready genius, and which disfigured the beauty of his *Funeral Orations*.

The great, the sublime, *Corneille*, who pleased the *ear* less than the *mind*, which he astonished; that *Corneille*, who *pictured* the souls of *Augustus*, *Cinna*, *Pompey*, and *Cornelia*, threw into the fire his *Pulcheria*, *Agésilas*, and

Surena, and sacrificed, without pity, those unfortunate children, the languid offspring of his old-age, and too unworthy of their elder brethren.

The more *pure*, the more *elegant*, the more *tender* *Racine*, who speaks nearer to the heart, engaging, without surprizing, his reader, takes a view of the portraits of *Bajazet*, *Xiphares*, *Brittannicus*, and *Hippolitus*. Scarce can he perceive any distinction between their touches; their merit is equal, alike tender, gallant, soft, and discrete; and *Love*, who follows in their train, takes them for *French-Courtiers*.

And, you, O favourite of nature; You, *La Fontaine*, whose

genius carelessly adorned, feels no restraint from rhyme, or measure, tell us, charming author! your opinion of your inimitable writings; direct us how to judge of your *Tales* and *Fables*.

La Fontaine, who preserved the native simplicity of his character, and who, in the *Temple of Taste*, joined *discretion* to that *happy instinct*, he had when alive, retrenched the *first*, and *last*, of his *Fables*, shortened his *Tales*, and tore away more than three fourths of an huge collection of *Posthumous Works*, printed by those editors, who live by the follies of the dead.

There reigned *Boileau*, their

master in the art of writing: he, who armed *Reason* with the darts of *Satire*: who giving the *precept* and *example* at once, made the rigorous laws of *Apollo* to flourish. He reviewed his offspring with a severe eye; he blushed at being the father of *Double Meaning*; he smiled at the weak strokes of his pencil, with which he disfigured *The Vanquisher of Namur*; he effaced them himself; and seems still to say,

OuSachez vousconnoitre,ou gardez vousd'ecrire.

Or know yourself, or venture not to write.

Boileau, by exprefs command of the *God of Taste*, reconciled himself with *Quinault*, who is the poet of the *Graces*, as *Boileau* is the poet

of *Reason*. But the severe *Satirist* embraced, with seeming unwillingness, the amiable and good-natured *Lyric*, who pardoned him with a smile. “ Our quarrel is at
 “ an end,” said *Boileau*, “ only
 “ on condition that you acknowledge, there are many things very
 “ insipid in those *Operas* of yours,
 “ which pleased so much.” “ With
 “ all my heart! I agree to it;”
 said *Quinault*; “ but you shall confess, in your turn, that you could
 “ not have written *Atys*, or *Ar-
 “ mida*. Be as correct in your
 “ beauties, as you please; may
 “ your works command respect;
 “ but suffer me to be *Amiable*.”
 “ Enchanted, and in raptures with

every thing about me, as I was traversing this sacred place, I encountered *Moliere*. I could not forbear addressing this short compliment to him.

“ The *Elegant*, but *Cold*, *Terrence* is the first of *Translators*:
 “ you was the *Painter* of our *Manners*, of the *Universe*, and of
 “ *France*: our haughty *Courtiers*,
 “ our prejudiced *Cits*, such objects
 “ of ridicule, beheld themselves
 “ drawn to the life by your pen :
 “ you would have corrected them,
 “ were the human mind capable
 “ of being so.”

“ Ah!” said he, “ Why did
 “ my *profession* oblige me to di-
 “ vide my talents? Why did I

“ write for the vulgar? Had I been
 “ master of my time, the unra-
 “ velling of my *plots* had been
 “ more happy, and my *plots*
 “ themselves more diversified;
 “ and had I written only for good
 “ judges, I should have given less
 “ into *Low Comedy*.”

Thus it was that these *Great Men* shewed their superiority by acknowleging their faults.

Every thing I saw convinced me, that the *God of Taste* is very difficult to please. I observed, that the works, which he is most particular in criticising, are those, which, upon the whole, please him most. No author, with him, is in the wrong, who has found out

the *Art of Pleasing* : he criticises without passion ; but he approves with transport. *Melpomene*, displaying her charms, presents her *Heroes* to him ; the *God* perceives their *faults*, but it is with tears : unhappy he, who ever *reasons*, never melts into compassion ! *God of Taste* ! Thy divine palace is an abode, such an one never approaches.

We were ready to depart, when the *God* addressed my *two Protectors* to the following effect.

“ Adieu ! my dearest favour-
 “ ites, loaded with the honours of
 “ *Parnassus* ! suffer not, in *Paris*,
 “ my *Rival* to usurp my place : I
 “ know, that *False-Taste* trembles

“ to appear before your piercing
 “ eyes. If ever you meet him,
 “ you will easily know him. E-
 “ ver loaded with ornaments, and
 “ adjusting his voice and looks, he
 “ assumes my name, and displays
 “ my standard ; but the impo-
 “ sture is easily seen thro’ ; for he
 “ is but the *Son of Art*, whereas
 “ I am *The Offspring of Nature*.

The *God*, then, spoke to them
 of the protection, which is due to
 the *Polite Arts*; of the glory they
 give to a country, where they flou-
 rish, to those who cultivate, and
 those, who patronize, them. He
 cried out, with a little *enthusiasm*,
 which sometimes, he does not dis-
 dain, but always knows how to

moderate ; “ Let *Clermont* (22)
 “ go on to brighten in the shine
 “ of my law : he, his sisters, the
 “ Loves, and myself, have, all, the
 “ same origin.——Shine, ye illu-
 “ strious *Youth of France!* in the
 “ bosom of *Polite Arts*, whilst
 “ the thunders of *Mars* repose in
 “ silence.——*Brassac!* (23) be
 “ ever my support ! ’Tis I have
 “ tuned the lyre, your fingers
 “ strike. You sing *Love’s* em-
 “ pire, and compose in *mine*.——

(22) *The count de Clermont, a prince of the blood, founded, at twenty years of age, an academy of arts, composed of an hundred persons, who assemble at his house ; and he is remarkable for patronizing all men of learning.*

(23) *The Chevalier de Brassac has not only the uncommon talent of composing the Music of an Opera ; but has the courage to get it per-*

“ *Cailus* (24)! You are dear to
 “ all the arts; I myself conduct
 “ your beautiful *Designs*; whilst
 “ *Raphael's* rejoice to be engraved
 “ by your hands. — Young

formed, and to set this example to the French Nobility. The Italians who have been our masters in every thing, have long not blushed to give their works to the public. The Marquis Maffei has just established the glory of the Italian theatre. The Baron d'Astorga, and the present Archbishop of Pisa, have composed several favourite Operas. The Works of the Chevalier de Brailiac's Opera are by Mr. de Monterif, author of the fable of Tithonus and Aurora.

(24) N—— Marquis de Cailus is famous for his Taste for Arts, and the Encouragement he gives to good Artists. He engraves himself; and his Designs are curiously expressed. The cabinets of the curious are full of them. Mr. de St. Maurice, an officer of the guards, engraves likewise: he has engraved a Design of Le Nain's, which is a master-piece.

“ *d’Estampes*, and you, *Surgere* (25)
 “ employ your assiduous cares in
 “ the excellent verses you deign
 “ to compose; and let the *Fools*,
 “ to their confusion, henceforth
 “ be taught, that *To follow Mi-*
 “ *nerva* and *Apollo* is not to de-
 “ *generate*.

(25) *N*—— de la Rochefoucault, Mar-
 quis de Surgere, has written a Comedy, en-
 titled *The School of the World*, a piece, with-
 out dispute, well written, and in which there
 are strokes, which the famous Duke de la
 Rochefoucault would have approved. The Mar-
 quis d’Estampes, who is called Mr. de la Ferte
 Imbaut, will allow me, notwithstanding his ex-
 treme modesty, to say, that he wrote, at the age
 of 18, a Tragedy in very harmonious verse, at
 a time when the old poets of the profession were
 so unreasonable as to write against Harmony.



T H E E N D

